

Application No.: 10/772916
Amendment dated: December 9, 2005
Reply to Office action of October 17, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants confirm the election of claims 1-17.

The examiner has relied primarily on Sosson U.S. patent 4,770,399, which describes a parts retainer for holding timing drive parts in a pre-assembled condition to expedite mounting on an engine. In Sosson, the parts are located in individual recesses in a retainer. Sosson does not say anything about stacking. The examiner relies on Calfee U.S. patent 5,685,441 for a disclosure of the use of legs to provide spaces between stacked elements for accommodating other articles.

In the present invention, the structure is different from that of Sosson. Briefly, in the invention, the sprockets, chain, tensioner, guides, etc., are exposed on one side of a support panel, while legs extend from the opposite side. This feature is now defined in specific language in the amended version of claim 1:

"a parts-retaining panel, having a front side and a rear side facing in opposite directions. . .

"parts. . . removably retained on the front side of said parts-retaining panel. . .

"said panel being removable from said parts by movement of the panel, in the direction in which the rear side faces. . .

"a plurality of legs extending from said rear side in the direction in which said rear side faces. . .

"said legs being substantially entirely rearward of said retained parts. . .

"and [said legs] being of sufficient length. . . to establish a hollow space between said panels sufficient to accommodate an identical set of parts retained on [an]. . . adjacent panel.

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There are no legs in Sosson, and there is no need for legs, since the parts are accommodated in recesses in a thick panel as in Sosson's FIGs 3 and 4, or in cavities in a formed thin panel as in Sosson's FIGs. 8 and 9. To the extent that the panels in Sosson are stackable, stackability is the result of the fact that the walls of the recesses extend from the bottoms of the recesses, past the parts, and toward the side of the panel on which the parts are exposed. Thus, even if someone wishing to avoid the recesses in Sosson, decided to utilize legs instead, the approach consistent with Sosson's teachings would be to provide the legs on the side of the panel on which the parts are exposed, not on the opposite side. The resulting structure would not correspond to Applicants' amended claim 1, and especially the limitation, "said legs being substantially entirely rearward of said retained parts." There is no suggestion in Sosson of retaining the parts on the front side of a panel and providing legs that are entirely rearward of the retained parts.

Calfee does not suggest positioning legs on the back side of Sosson's panel in order to provide space for parts mounted on an adjacent panel when panels, loaded with parts, are stacked. Calfee merely stacks plural pedestal components, and provides space between the components for lateral insertion of articles. There are no parts removably retained in a predetermined relationship on the top of a pedestal component in Calfee.

In summary, there is nothing in Sosson and Calfee from which a person of ordinary skill would derive a suggestion of retaining a set of machine parts on the front of a supporting panel and providing legs on the rear of the panel, the legs being substantially entirely rearward of the retained parts.

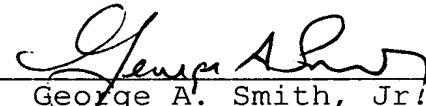
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Claim 2 has been made dependent on claim 1, and each of claims 2-17 is dependent, either directly or indirectly, on amended claim 1.

For the reasons set forth above, and in view of the amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-17 should be found allowable, and request reconsideration and allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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